Postal Finance Marts

746. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the concept of Postal Finance Marts;

(b) how these Marts would help the customers;

(c) whether it is a fact that this scheme is going to be implemented in the Tenth Five Year Plan; and

(d) if so, the details of post offices identified in Andhra Pradesh to implement this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) The Postal Finance Mart (PFM) envisages providing all the Post Office Savings Bank Schemes, Financial Services/Products of Department of Posts and Partnership products/Services under one roof in a fully computerized office supported by technology, at par with reputed banking institutions. It also provides specialized value added financial services, public-private partnership products in conformity with market standards, in a customer friendly environment, in an ergonomically improved post office.

(b) The post office customers who invest modest amounts at regular intervals will feel more confident and comfortable in approaching PFM, a government outlet which will provide focused and efficient banking service at par with public sector banks to meet their diverse banking needs.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The list of 9 post offices identified in Andhra Pradesh where Postal Finance Marts scheme will be implemented in Financial Year 2005-06 is given below:

Sl. No.	Name of Post Offices
1	2
1.	Hyderabad GPO
2.	Secunderabad HPO
3.	Vijayawada HPO
4.	Kurnool Comp-B LSG PO

1	2
5. Karimnagar HO	
6. Daba Gardens LSG PO	
7. L B Colony SO	
8. Nizambad RS LSG PO	
9. D H Satun SO	

Effect of private telecom operators on teledensity

747. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the teledensity in the country has gone up as a result of allowing private operators in communication network;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the percentage of coverage of rural areas by private operators out of their total communication coverage in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The entry of private operators in telecom sector was allowed with the announcement of National Telecom Policy-1994 (NTP-94). The overall teledensity which was only 0.89% then has risen continuously and has touched 11.76% as on 31.01.2006.

(c) The coverage of rural areas by private operators is almost negligible on account of non-viability of the operations. However, they have provided a total 37,903 Rural Direct Exchange Lines (RDELs), 9641 Village Public Telephones (VPTs) and 6119 Rural Community Phones (RCPs) Under the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) as on 31.12.2005.

Elimination of access deficit charges

748. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has mooted a three-stage process to eliminate the Access Deficit Charges (ADCs) regime by 2008-09;

(b) if so, the details thereof;